

Geographic Review Panel 3 – American River/Eastside Tribes

Proposal number: 2001-C204

Short Proposal Title: Sediment in Delta and Suisun Bay

1. Applicability to CALFED ERP Goals and Implementation Plan and CVPIA priorities, and relevance to ERP and CVPIA priorities for your region. The direct links between this work and the goal of maintaining and enhancing anadromous fish population or of improving and maintaining water and sediment quality are extremely tenuous. However, the work seems likely to generate short-term information relevant to delta restoration projects that require input on sediment location and availability, and will certainly make more robust the numerical transport models currently being developed to quantify the presence of mercury and selenium. Further, the proposed research may ultimately prove an important monitoring element in the goal to improve and maintain water and sediment quality.

2. Linkages/coordination with previously funded projects or other restoration activities in your region. Well defined, including the application of research results to areas of uncertainty in ongoing CALFED funded delta restoration projects and delta/estuary modeling projects.

3. Feasibility, especially the project's ability to move forward in a timely and successful manner. Yes, the proposed project is technically feasible, although the Panel questions whether the project can address the most important hypotheses in the three-year time frame proposed. The work is a continuation of previously funded research conducted by the principal investigators using well-established techniques in somewhat new applications.

4. Qualifications of the applicants and others involved in implementing the proposed project. The principal investigators are highly qualified to conduct the work.

5. Local involvement (including environmental compliance). Poorly defined, other than that results from past work are available on the web, and that final results will be compiled into professional papers and reports.

6. Cost. 1.4 million dollars, with no in-kind contribution of any sort. The budget seems excessive, even taking into consideration the necessity of boats and the logistical issues associated with responsiveness to unique weather events.

7. Cost sharing. None.

8. Additional comments. It's unclear how the intended research will discriminate between competing but not mutually exclusive elements of the system. For example, differentiating between the effects of past large-scale events like hydraulic mining, recent land use changes and the impact of reservoirs. The proposal assumes that monitoring can be adjusted to discriminate (which seems questionable), states that if necessary the monitoring will be adjusted, then doesn't state how.

Regional Ranking

Panel Ranking: Medium

Provide a brief explanation of your ranking: See comments above. The project will provide information necessary for a better understanding of sediment transport mechanisms in the Delta, has some short term benefits to active restoration projects in the Delta. The greatest benefits seem to be long term and in two specific areas: (1) as structural support to numerical transport

models currently being developed to quantify the presence of mercury and selenium, and (2) as a monitoring element in the goal to improve and maintain water and sediment quality.